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ABSTRACT

This Teacher Corps program at Michigan State University is attempting to improve the quality of preservice teacher education within a competency based framework. The program emphasizes consistent use of instructional design and the instructional processes of assessment, goal setting, determining objectives, developing teaching strategies, and evaluating. During this two-year program, students spend 50 percent of their time in an internship at a Lansing elementary school and 50 percent of their time in completing degree requirements. Additionally, the interns receive field-based bilingual training and are involved in a variety of community based activities. In the spring of 1973, 30 interns were selected for this program from populations which included Mexican-Americans and/or Spanish-speaking, blacks, American Indians, and economically disadvantaged whites. On examining the academic achievement of these interns, it was found that the mean grade point average for these Teacher Corps interns was the same as for the seniors in the College of Education at Michigan State University. Fifty percent of the minority interns had grade point averages equal to or better than the average for the seniors in the College of Education. The nonminority interns had the highest grade point averages of any of the groups in this comparison. When the interns were grouped by sex, the male interns appeared very similar to the minority interns, while the females closely resembled the nonminority interns. (BD)

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THE ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE OF TEACHER CORPS INTERNS AT MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY - AN INTERIM REPORT

Teacher Corps is an experimental teacher training program in which the Lansing School District, Michigan State University through its Colleges of Education and Urban Development, and Model Cities have worked cooperatively in an effort to give children from low-income families better educational opportunities. More specifically, Teacher Corps is attempting to improve the quality of pre-service teacher education within a competency based framework. The program emphasizes consistent use of instructional design and the instructional processes of assessment, goal setting, determining objectives, developing teaching strategies and evaluating. The program also stresses a pupil management model built around the concepts of creating, maintaining and restoring optimal learning conditions.

During the two-year program, the students will have spent 50 percent of their time in an internship in Lansing elementary school. Each year the intern will be in a different elementary school and will teach a different grade level. This internship is directly supervised by a master teacher from the Lansing School District and a clinic professor from Michigan State University. The remaining 50 percent of their time is to be used completing degree requirements; all methods courses are integrated with the internship, and successful completion requires demonstrated competency in the field. Additionally, the interns receive field-based bilingual training, and they are involved in a variety of community based activities.

In the spring of 1973, thirty candidates were selected from a field of over 100 applications interviewed by two Screening and Selection Committees. There were representatives from the school district, the

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community and the university on each selection committee.[1] During the interviews, the committees rated each candidate in the following areas: general experience, personal characteristics (verbal ability - attitude - poise), previous educational training and experience, interest in urban teaching, and knowledge of the demands of teaching.

The selection of the thirty interns for Eighth Cycle Teacher Corps was based on the guidelines as listed in the Eighth Cycle Teacher Corps proposal.[2] Specifically, these guidelines provided for the impartial treatment of all ethnic groups found in the local area, i.e., the State of Michigan. To insure that the new directions indicated by this proposal were achieved, final intern selection was made from the Mexican-Americans, and/or Spanish Speaking, Black, American Indian and economically disadvantaged white populations.[3] Thus, Eighth Cycle Teacher Corps began with ten Latino interns, ten Black interns, eight Anglo interns and two American Indian interns.

The criteria for selection of interns are listed in the Eighth Cycle Teacher Corps proposal.[4]

While previous academic performance was not ignored in the selection of interns, it did receive low priority. As a rule, interns were expected to have a grade point average of 2.0 (C) on a 4.0 scale.

After six terms, how has this group of interns performed academically? Are there differences between the minority and non-minority interns? Do male interns compare favorably with female interns? The answers to these questions and related questions are discussed in the following paragraphs.

TABLE I

Distribution of GPA for Teacher Corps Interns - Fall 1974

Range	Number	Percent
4.0 - 3.49	3	10.71
3.45 - 3.00	12	42.86
2.97 - 3.00	12	42.86
1.81 - 1.50	1	3.57
TOTAL	28	100.00

All Seniors College of Education GPA 3.00

Mean Grade Point Average for All Interns 3.00

Table I shows the distribution of grade point averages for all Teacher Corps interns. It can be concluded from this table that mean grade point average for Teacher Corps interns is the same as it is for the seniors in the College of Education. Slightly more than half of the interns, 15 or 53.57 percent, have an accumulated grade point average of 3.00 or better. Only one intern has a grade point average below the minimum standard of 2.00 for satisfactory work.

As indicated in Table II, half of the minority interns or 50 percent have grade point averages equal to or better than the average for the seniors in the College of Education. These ten students represent 35.71 percent of the total group of 28 interns. It is also interesting to note that 95 percent or 19 of the 20 minority interns are clustered in the distribution that ranges between 2.47 and 3.45. These 19 interns represent 67.86 percent of all interns. The slight difference of 0.12 percent between the mean grade point averages of the minority students and College of Education students is of little consequence when viewed as a measure of central tendency. Included in this group is the one intern who has not maintained the minimum passing grade point average.

The grade point average distribution of the eight non-minority interns (Table III) follows a more uniform distribution -- this is especially true when compared to the minority interns. Five of these interns which represents 17.86 percent of the total group have grade point averages that are equal to or better than the average for the College of Education. This group also has the highest mean grade point average (3.27) of any of the groups in this comparison. The three interns with the highest grade point averages are also in this group.

TABLE II

Distribution of GPA for Teacher Corps Minority Interns - Fall 1974

Range	Number	Percent
4.0 - 3.49	0	
3.45 - 3.00	10	50.00
2.97 - 2.47	9	45.00
1.81 - 1.50	1	5.00
TOTAL	20	100.00

Mean Grade Point Average for Minority Interns 2.88

TABLE III

Distribution of GPA for Teacher Corps Non-Minority Interns - Fall 1974

Range	Number	Percent
4.0 - 3.49	3	37.50
3.45 - 3.00	2	25.00
2.97 - 2.47	3	37.50
1.81 - 1.50	0	
TOTAL	8	100.00
Mean Grade Point Average for non-Minority Interns		3.27

When the interns are grouped by sex, the male interns (Table IV) appear very similar to the minority interns. Both groups have the same mean grade point average, and the majority of interns are clustered in the distribution that ranges between 2.47 and 3.45. For the male interns, 93.75 percent are clustered in this range as compared to 94.74 percent for the minority interns. When measured by the students in the College of Education, this group compared quite favorably with only a .13 percent difference between the two groups.

When Tables I and III are considered along with Table V, it becomes clear that the three interns with the highest grade point averages were non-minority females. These interns tend to follow a more generalized distribution pattern than either the male interns or the minority interns. When viewed closely, the female interns resembled the non-minority interns. The mean grade point averages are nearly the same with a 3.27 average for the non-minority interns, while the female interns earned a 3.16 average or a difference of .11 percent.

In summary, this comparison has shown that differences between Teacher Corps interns and their counterparts, College of Education seniors, do not emerge when viewed as measures of central tendency. However, when comparisons are made within the Teacher Corps group, differences do emerge when racial distinctions are made. Differences also occur when the Teacher Corps group is divided by sex.

Finally, the minority interns and the male interns resemble each other very closely while the female interns and the non-minority interns are nearly alike. These similarities can partly be explained by the distribution of minority interns among the male and female interns. For the

TABLE IV

Distribution of GPA for Teacher Corps Male Interns - Fall 1974

Range	Number	Percent
4.0 - 3.49	0	
3.45 - 3.00	8	50.00
2.97 - 2.47	7	43.75
1.81 - 1.50	1	6.25
TOTAL	16	100.00

Mean Grade Point Average for Male Interns 2.87

TABLE V

Distribution of GPA for Teacher Corps Female Interns - Fall 1974

Range	Number	Percent
4.0 - 3.49	3	25.00
3.45 - 3.00	4	33.33
2.97 - 2.47	5	41.67
1.81 - 1.50	0	
TOTAL	12	100.00

Mean Grade Point Average for Female Interns 3.16

male interns, 12 of 16, or 75 percent, are minority interns, while eight of 12, or 66 2/3 percent of the female interns are members of a minority.

It is noteworthy that this group of Teacher Corps interns has performed academically as well as regular teacher education trainees, and this is especially true when one considers the additional work and other responsibilities required of these students.

REFERENCES

[1] Lansing School District and Michigan State University, Lansing School District Eighth Cycle Teacher Corps Proposal, Section VII, p. 2, Lansing School District, Lansing, Michigan, Winter, 1972.

[2] Ibid., Section VII, p. 4-9.

[3] Ibid., Sections II and III.

[4] Ibid., Section VII, p. 1-9.